

December 8, 2013

## Worku Jember Memorial Academy

In 1965, I took a tour of north-west Ethiopia with pastor Od Jordal, the then president of the Ethiopian Union Ph.D. Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church. The trip took nine days, travelling on foot and mule back. One evening, as we were camping at the end of the days' journey, pastor Jordal was lying in his tent reflecting on the journey of the day and remarked, "if there is a region in the world forsaken by God it must be this/'

The land was awfully degraded, the people looked haggard and their future looked bleak. No roads, no schools, no health facilities of any sort, and no means of communication with the rest of the world.

Forty eight years later when I visited that same region with seven of my friends, what did I see in that forlorn region? I saw a modern academy with all the necessary facilities - a library, a science laboratory, spacious classrooms, faculty homes and a water well supplying all the daily needs of both students and faculty. A Worku Jember Memorial Academy, in that desolate place.

Forty eight years ago, we saw the needs but we could not offer any solutions to the needs. One man saw the needs and dreamed the solution. Professor Adu, a native of the region like my-self, is a visionary. You know, the Bible tells us that "where there is no vision the people perish." The converse of that statement is just as true. When there is vision the people will not perish, but will prosper spiritually as well as materially. I was thrilled and absolutely overwhelmed to find an academy of that standard in the middle of that neglected or forgotten land.

A new day has dawned for that region all because one man had a vision and had the wisdom of sharing that vision with others who had the means and the good will to help those who are less fortunate. Many individuals working together in unity have made the establishment of this academy possible. Congratulations to all those who played a part to make this project a success. I only wish you could see what I've seen.

Truneh Wolde Selassie